

December 8, 1942

Captain Frederick R. Hook, U.S.N.  
U. S. Naval Hospital  
Oakland, California

Dear Captain Hook:

I certainly enjoyed your recent letter and delayed writing you with the hope that we would be going full blast and I could tell you about it. Unfortunately, all our supplies have not yet arrived and we are still waiting, which I am gradually learning to do with great proficiency since entering the service.

The physical set up of the hospital is complete and resembles any other army station hospital. We have facilities for about 900 beds and it is probable that this will grow to about 1200 in the near future. I have been quite fortunate in the organization of the surgical service. Three of the men heading the respective sections of orthopedics, septic surgery, and general surgery were trained at Tulane and were associated with us there before entering the service. This makes it not only pleasant but relieves me of considerable responsibility. Our G. U. and E.E.N.T. services are also headed by well trained specialists who are fine fellows. In fact our personnel in general consists of unusually well-trained and pleasant individuals. Our greatest difficulty seems to be getting supplies but we hope this will soon be corrected (in fact, I heard today that three carload of supplies have just arrived).

I was in Atlanta recently to attend a meeting of the Chiefs of Services of the Fourth Service Command and met a number of friends among whom were Colonel Morgan and Nick Carter. Seeing them again was most enjoyable and we indulged in pleasant reminiscences of our barn-storming tour. Only your presence could have made it more delightful.

I want to tell you again how much I regret that the meeting of the American College was called off, for I had made arrangements here to fly up and was looking forward to seeing you. If there is any possibility of you coming through here on your way to or from Virginia, I hope you can arrange to stop with us. In any event, I would like to get a copy of your paper for abstraction and translation into Spanish to publish in America Clinica. This, of course, will not prevent you from publishing it elsewhere in this country.

Fortunately since arriving here, I have had sufficient time to continue my writing and editorial work and have already completed several publications. However, I still have much to do with several articles, partially completed and one section on Surgical Amebiasis to be done for Lewis' System of Surgery. These will keep me from getting rusty.

Christmas will soon be here so, in addition to my best regards, let me wish you and yours a most enjoyable Christmas.

Respectfully yours,

Michael E. DeBakey,  
Captain, M. C.,  
Chief of Surgical Service.